KV FOCUS

A Kalamazoo Valley Community College Publication
August 2017

FALL SEMESTER
BEGINS SEPTEMBER 5
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TOP JOBS
TOP TRAINING AT VALLEY

What do these jobs have in common?

- Dental Hygienist
- Respiratory Therapist
- Programmer
- Industrial Engineering Technician
- Police Officer
- HVAC Mechanic

They are among the high-paying jobs you can land with an associate degree. Training for all of these and dozens more are available at Kalamazoo Valley Community College.

Matt Karel, a 2003 Computer Information Systems (CIS) program graduate

"While nearly half of our students are enrolled in four-year bachelor's degree transfer programs the other half of our students are completing programs for more immediate jobs and careers," said Executive Vice President for Instruction and Student Success Services, Dr. Dennis Bertch. "One of the most important benefits of Kalamazoo Valley is that we offer programs and support services that assist each student in achieving their individual educational goals."

There are reasonable questions that arise with associate degrees. Do good associate degree jobs exist? What fields offer jobs you can get with an associate degree? Are these jobs satisfying and financially rewarding? The answer is a resounding "yes!"

Matt Karel, a 2003 Computer Information Systems (CIS) program graduate has been employed at Bronson Methodist Hospital for 13 years. He is a member of Bronson's Server Team supporting more than 9,000 users. "My training at Kalamazoo Valley and the classes I took in the CIS department such as Network Operating systems – Novell Netware, along with my internship with the City of Portage, prepared me for my various roles here at Bronson."

Karel added, "My courses helped set that foundation - giving me a leg up. That experience and my training at Kalamazoo Valley really allowed me to grow and launched me to where I am today."

In general, students can step immediately from college to the work force and make a sizable income, the highest paying associate degree jobs can result in a six-figure salary. From technical careers to jobs in the medical profession, an associate degree from Kalamazoo Valley has proven to pay dividends for thousands of graduates over the past fifty years.

Trent Sauer, a 2016 Computer Aided Design program graduate who works at Tekna, Inc., a contract design and manufacturing company said, "I enjoyed the hands-on learning in every course I took at Valley. Along with the small class sizes and passionate professors, the courses I took taught me how to use the 3D modeling I use every day at work."

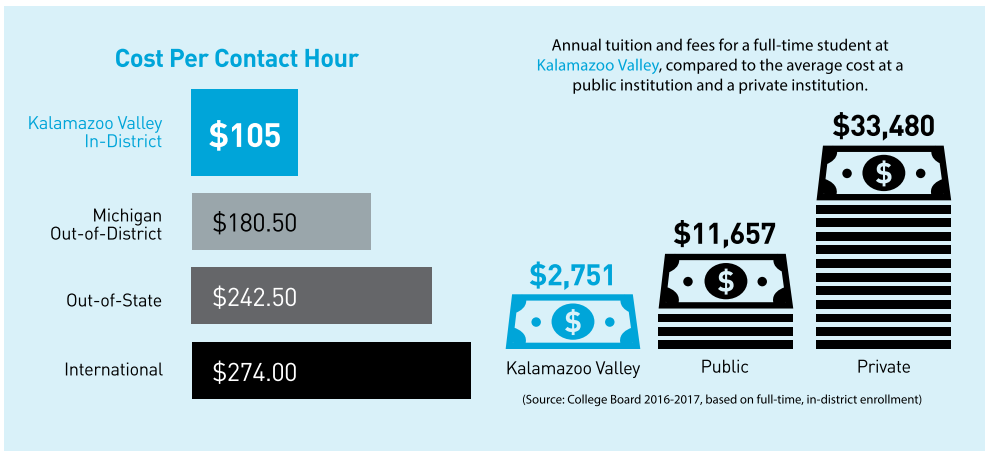
According to information from geteducated.com, there are many reasons that people choose an associate degree, but it really boils down to two major motivations: a quality education and a more affordable price tag.

Keeping college tuition affordable has always been a priority at Kalamazoo Valley. Recent statistics demonstrate the relative affordability of Valley when compared to four-year public and private educational institutions.

Paul Abrahamsen, who graduated from Kalamazoo Valley in 1978 with a liberal arts degree before transferring to Western Michigan University and then Ohio Northern University Claude W. Pettit College of Law said, "Kalamazoo Valley was by far the best school I attended, primarily because of the instructors. I would not be where I am today without the start I got at Valley."

Whether you want to jump-start your education in an affordable manner or study for two years to launch a profitable career, an associate degree is a great choice. With a high-paying associate degree within reach and little to no student debt, the future is bright for Kalamazoo Valley graduates.

Fall semester starts on Tuesday, Sept. 5. For more information, visit www.kvcc.edu/register.



LOY NORRIX, WAYNE STATE STANDOUT NAMED NEW WOMEN'S BASKETBALL COACH

Kalamazoo native and Loy Norrix High School graduate Talisha Bridges was recently named the new head coach for Kalamazoo Valley Community College's women's basketball program.

The 26-year-old returns to West Michigan to replace Maureen Brown, who led the Lady Cougars to the Elite Eight in the Division II National Tournament this past season. Brown left the program to spend more time with her family.

"As a native of Kalamazoo, I know what the community has done for me and I'm ready to pay it forward," Bridges said. "I'm excited to be back home and coaching at Kalamazoo Valley Community College."

Kalamazoo Valley Athletic Director Russ Panico believes Bridges has the skills and dedication to run the historically successful women's basketball program.

"Talisha is highly knowledgeable of the game of basketball and has boundless energy and motivation to continue the winning legacy of the women's basketball program at Kalamazoo Valley," Panico said.

The 5'9 forward graduated from Loy Norrix in 2009. Her talent on the court for the Loy Norrix Knights earned her a scholarship to play basketball at the University of New Orleans. After one season, she transferred to Stoney Brook University in New York and eventually to Wayne State University in Detroit. Bridges excelled on and off the court while at Wayne State. She scored in double figures in 26 of 31 games she played, ranks ninth in all-time scoring average (15.5) and was named to the Athletic Director's Honor Roll for her hard work in the classroom. Bridges graduated from WSU in 2013 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in sociology.

While working on her master's degree at WSU, she served in multiple coaching roles at the collegiate level, including serving as an assistant coach under long-time Kalamazoo Valley women's basketball coach Ron Welch.

Bridges credits Welch for teaching her what it takes to be a successful coach.

"My time with Coach Welch was a great experience," Bridges recalled. "I learned what it took to be a good coach and what it was like to run a very successful program. I was able to observe a lot and really soak it all in."

In addition to coaching, Bridges, who earned her master's degree in sports administration this year, is also the founder and CEO of Begin Achieving New Goals (BANG). The non-profit organization is designed to empower student-athletes through the avenues of academics, athletics, and community outreach.

"I'm ready to make an impact in the Kalamazoo community," Bridges said.

She hopes to bring BANG's philosophies to Kalamazoo Valley's basketball program.

New women's basketball coach Talisha Bridges

"I want to get the girls more involved outside of the classroom and the basketball court," she said. "I want to see them in the community doing it all and not just putting a ball in a basket. I want to prepare them for life after basketball."

The Lady Cougars' season opens Oct. 1. Visit www.kvcccougars.com for a complete schedule.

VALLEYHUB IS GROWING
BY SUPPORTING LOCAL FOOD SYSTEMS

ValleyHUB's local produce ready for distribution

With more and more meals consumed away from home, in restaurants and institutional settings, the ValleyHUB food hub plays a crucial role in getting fresh, local food onto more plates in southwest Michigan by bridging the gap between produce growers and consumers.

The food hub is located at the college's Food Innovation Center, one of three buildings on the Bronson Healthy Living Campus in downtown Kalamazoo. The Center includes a 16,400 square-foot teaching, training and growing building and a 9,600 square-foot greenhouse on approximately eight acres of reclaimed urban space. This summer, a new refrigerated truck started making rounds. Four to five times a week, the ValleyHUB truck picks up and delivers produce in Bangor, Benton Harbor, Galesburg, Kalamazoo, Mattawan, and Battle Creek.

The eight-person crew at the ValleyHUB is staying busy – assisting local farmers by lightly processing their produce - which involves washing, peeling, chopping, and sometimes freezing it – and distributing it to local customers. "We are particularly focused on getting more fresh, local vegetables into the meals our community eats in institutions - like schools, workplace cafeterias, and most critically, hospitals," according to Rachel Bair, director of Sustainable and Innovative Food Systems. "Most of the produce goes to Bronson Methodist Hospital's cafeteria."

At Bronson, powdered potatoes and frozen french fries have disappeared from the menu, thanks to fresh deliveries from the food hub. "Here in Kalamazoo, we average about 3,200 cafeteria transactions and 900 patient meals daily – that adds up to 1.5 million meals annually," said Grant Fletcher, Bronson's System Director for Healthy Living and Sustainability. "Our goal is to locally source 60 percent of our food. ValleyHUB is helping us achieve that goal."

In addition to Bronson's purchases, specialty Asian greens are being grown for sale to Pacific Rim Foods in Kalamazoo, and a variety of local produce is being delivered to PFC Natural Grocery & Deli, and new customers and partners are being sought. "ValleyHUB helps farmers focus on growing and helps them to break into new markets," Bair said.

As a link between local growers and consumers, food production at the Food Innovation Center is focused on new, innovative, and high-tech methods for growing, including hydroponics and aquaponics. The outdoor growing areas showcase traditional sustainable methods. "We produce a diverse mix of crops for demonstration and educational purposes and a high volume of a few key crops for customers," Bair said. "The ValleyHUB is a flexible space that was designed to be scaled up gradually and adapt to local market needs."

Food Innovation Center objectives include providing hands-on training and credit-based education that leads to jobs in the local food system. Unique training opportunities for students enrolled in the college's Culinary Arts and Sustainable Food Systems programs are offered here. "When possible, we also seek to create community benefits through our students' work," Bair said. "Students practice real-world skills while supplementing the Kalamazoo food supply and providing services to local farms and cafeterias." For example, ValleyHUB makes donations to Kalamazoo Loaves and Fishes and Ministry With Community – finding a home for produce that might otherwise go unused.

Locally farmed kale being processed at the ValleyHUB

The food hub also helps area growers gain and maintain food safety certification through participation with the Michigan GroupGAP Network. Students in AGF 210, Healthy Plant to Plate, study food supply chains and spend time working on research and development activities in the food hub.

To learn more about the food hub, or become a supplier or customer, contact fic@kvcc.edu. Fall semester at Kalamazoo Valley begins on Tuesday, Sept. 5. For information about the Culinary Arts and Sustainable Food Systems programs and registration, visit www.kvcc.edu/register.

Food Innovation Center ValleyHUB delivery truck

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT
Anora Ackerson

Like many community college instructors, Dr. Anora Ackerson gained years of work experience before becoming a teacher. Prior to joining the faculty at Kalamazoo Valley, she was a social worker for 25 years and a part-time instructor at Western Michigan University. As she begins her 15th year at Kalamazoo Valley, she is still happy with the role that seems to have been tailor made for her.

"It was the right fit at the right time," Ackerson says of her dual position as a sociology and psychology instructor. "I had always loved teaching, but not many opportunities like this come up."

She was one of the first group of full-time faculty members to be hired specifically to teach at the Arcadia Commons Campus. "This was a great place for me to come after working in social work for 25 years," Ackerson said. "My experience adds dimension to what I talk about in the classroom because I've been there. I also talk about all of the mistakes I've made because none of us do this perfectly."

Ackerson considers the downtown campus an ideal location. "The campus provides great opportunities for learning about our community," she said. "My students experience everything that's within walking distance – the Kalamazoo Valley Museum, Ministry With Community, the CentraCare day program. Any time I can connect them with what's really happening, the experience is so much more meaningful. You can watch videos in the classroom, but when you actually go out and see people and programs, it makes a real difference in understanding more about the society we live in."

When she isn't in the classroom or introducing her students to the community, Ackerson often travels. She's been to China, The British Isles, Europe, Northern Africa, and Scandinavia. "I want to continue to travel. I really love it," she said. Her daughter Autumn is an Aquinas College student who shares her sense of adventure and her caring attitude toward others.

Because sociology and psychology are often required classes, Ackerson has gotten to know many Kalamazoo Valley students through the years. "My greatest joy is when someone takes a class that's required and then comes up and says 'this was more enjoyable than I expected, can you recommend another class?' If students can develop an appreciation for the topic, then I think we've done our job," she said.

Ackerson has always respected her students' differences. "I spend a lot of time speaking to people about balance," she said. "I understand that taking classes is not all that our students do. On any given day, my students may have to juggle school, work and family responsibilities. It is my job to be helpful where I can and honest when the other priorities become too overwhelming."

Ackerson said she most enjoys working with very supportive colleagues and the opportunity to get to know students of all ages. "The best thing and probably the most challenging thing about being a Kalamazoo Valley instructor is the different types of students that we have – the diversity of ages and cultures. They all come to us with different goals and expectations. If you can expose students to new ideas, and act as a guide on that journey, then you've been successful."

DENTAL CLINIC IS WIN-WIN FOR STUDENTS, COMMUNITY

Dental hygiene student training at Dental Clinic

Before 24-year-old Samantha Adams even begins her career as a dental hygienist, she will have already worked alongside an experienced dentist, established caseloads and provided dental care to more than 50 Kalamazoo area residents.

The 2011 Grandville High School graduate is in her third semester of Kalamazoo Valley Community College's two-year dental hygiene program and will spend more than 500 hours in the college's Texas Township Dental Clinic providing patients with a variety of services for good oral health before she graduates in May of 2018.

The dental hygiene program prepares students, like Adams, to become qualified dental hygiene practitioners. Students must complete one year of prerequisite courses prior to applying to the dental hygiene program. Twenty-four students are admitted each fall based on overall GPA (from Kalamazoo Valley Community College if available and from all applicable transfer institutions). Graduates of this program are granted an Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.) degree and are eligible to take the National Board Exam in Dental Hygiene and the Regional or State Licensing Exams.

Students receive 20 weeks of classroom instruction and work on mannequins as well as one another prior to meeting with patients.

To give students the practical, hands-on experience they need to become licensed dental hygienists, the clinic is open to the public. Students provide discounted dental hygiene care under the supervision of their instructors who are licensed dentists and dental hygienists.

"Our students do the same work that would be done in private practice under the realm of dental hygiene," said Dental Hygiene Program Director Kimberly Grubka. "We can clean teeth, take x-rays, and place protective sealants on molars."

Additionally, Grubka said, the clinic offers Orofacial Myofunctional Therapy (MFT), or tongue thrust therapy. MFT training within a dental hygiene program is unique to the state of Michigan.

"The students learn how to assess a person's tongue position and the affects the tongue has on eating, occlusion and speech and then recommendations are made," she explained. "Recommendations may be limited to exercises or may include a medical referral for nose and throat treatment, or a dental referral for limited oral surgery prior to exercise therapy."

Students do not fill cavities, do extractions, make or adjust dentures, or other procedures done strictly by a dentist but are able to make recommendations to area dental offices, if necessary.

The 8,000 square-foot-clinic is equipped with $2 million worth of computer-driven dental equipment. The large open space features 14 operatory chairs and four x-ray operatories as well as a conference room and classroom. Each station is equipped with a video camera and microphone so students can review their work with instructors. A large waiting room and receptionist welcome patients to the clinic.

"I looked at other schools but after touring Valley's campus and the Dental Clinic, I knew that this was the right program for me," Adams said. "The space is perfect for learning – everything is right there."

Because it is a teaching clinic and students are learning to perform thorough assessments and services, time spent in the clinic is longer than a typical visit to the dentist.

"Patients get quality care that is less expensive but are paying with their time," Grubka said.

The initial appointment is a free 30-minute screening where a patient's medical history is evaluated and a quick assessment is completed of the oral cavity. Following the screening, an appointment for cleaning is scheduled. Appointments are three hours in length, allowing time for the students to collect the data necessary to make a complete dental hygiene diagnosis with a treatment plan that fills the client's dental hygiene needs. Faculty members evaluate students during the appointment to assess students' progress. Depending on the patient's dental hygiene needs, additional appointments may be required.

"It's a definite time commitment but one that is critical to student learning," Grubka said. "Students get the best, hands-on training working on people from the community."

The time commitment doesn't seem to be a deterrent. Community members scheduled more than 550 appointments during the Fall 2016 semester.

"We have people who have been coming to us for years," said Grubka, who has been with the college for 25 years. "People prefer our care because it is so very thorough."

While the clinic has an established patient list, they are always looking for new patients, Grubka said, especially those in need of tongue thrust therapy.

Clinic hours are as follows:

FALL SEMESTER (Sept. 5 – Dec. 18)
Tues/Wed/Thurs 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

WINTER SEMESTER (Jan. 8 – April 30)
Tues/Thurs 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Wed 12:30 – 4:30 p.m.

SUMMER SEMESTER (May 7 – Aug. 20)
Wed/Thurs 11:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

To make an appointment, call 269.488.4338.

Students interested in a career in dental hygiene should contact Grubka at 269.488.4719 or kgrubka@kvcc.edu or visit www.kvcc.edu/dental.

DENTAL CLINIC PRICING

ADULTS:
Cleaning includes: Oral Exam, Patient Education, Cleaning, Polish, and Fluoride

Cleaning Cost	$46.00 - $64.00*
Full-mouth X-rays	$15.00
Bitewings	$8.00

CHILDREN:
Cleaning includes: Oral Exam, Patient Education, Cleaning, Polish, and Fluoride

Age 13 or younger	$26.00
Full-mouth X-rays	$15.00
Bitewings	$8.00

ORAL EXAM:

Required with all services	$10.00

ADDITIONAL SERVICES:

Pit & Fissure Sealant	$5.00/tooth
Athletic Mouthguard	$5.00
MFT Initial Evaluation	$25.00
Exercise Book	$25.00
MFT Therapy Lessons	$10.00

**Price is determined by difficulty of cleaning*

DENTAL SERVICES NOW FREE TO AREA VETERANS

The Dental Clinic at Kalamazoo Valley recently began offering free dental services to veterans in the community.

"We respect what these men and women have done for our country," said Dental Hygiene Program Director Kimberly Grubka. "It's only fitting that we show our support."

Veterans and service members must show military ID or proof of military service to receive the free services. For more information or to make an appointment, call 269.488.4338.

EXPANDING OPTIONS FOR LIFE LONG LEARNERS

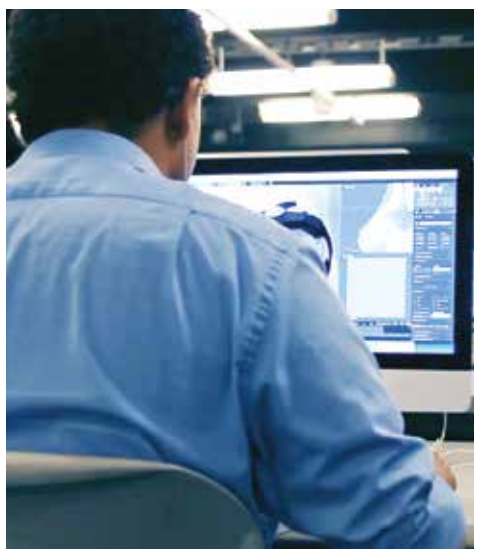
Bee hives at the Food Innovation Center

From Beekeeping to Fundamentals of Individual Stock Investing and Audio and Video Production to Zumba, area life-long learners have dozens of options at Kalamazoo Valley.

The upcoming fall schedule includes courses including well-established favorites like Beekeeping and Fitness Basics along with new Saturday offerings for youth at the college's Center for New Media on the Arcadia Commons Campus.

"The focus of these programs is to build on the college's mission," said Elizabeth Lyons, Kalamazoo Valley's manager of Career and Continuing Education, "which is to enrich the lives of our students and communities through quality educational programs and services."

The wide variety of courses involve community exposure to all four of the college campus locations. For a complete schedule and to register visit: www.kvcc.edu/training schedule.



Audio and Video Production class

DOWNTOWN CAMPUSES STRENGTHENING TIES WITH STUDENTS AND COMMUNITY

Kalamazoo Valley Museum

The completion of a paved trail connecting downtown Kalamazoo with a regional non-motorized network is scheduled to be finished yet this year. This new connection winds past the Kalamazoo Valley Museum on the college's Arcadia Commons Campus going through Arcadia Creek Festival Place before joining the rest of the Kalamazoo River Valley Trail (KVRT) on Harrison Street. According to Kalamazoo County Parks and Recreation Director Dave Rachowicz, "The trail route is used for recreation and as a commuter route, giving cyclists and all kinds of non-motorized traffic a safe path."

"We are finding that a number of faculty members and students are riding their bikes to our downtown campus locations," said Executive Vice President for Enrollment Management and Campus Operations Mike Collins. "When the college was approached by the planning committee composed of bike advocacy groups, public officials and other community partners, we looked for a way be a part of the KRVT connector effort."

This effort complements downtown KRVT expansion recently completed along the east side of Portage Creek in Upjohn Park between Walnut and Lake streets and through the college's Bronson Healthy Living Campus. "As more and more people live, work and attend classes downtown, we want our students to understand that part of our commitment to the area is helping to expand mobility options which include walking and biking trails," Collins said. These efforts help to fulfill the KRVT vision.

Another initiative, Gardening Kalamazoo for Clean Water, will serve to implement green infrastructure on the Arcadia Commons Campus and the Kalamazoo Valley Museum.

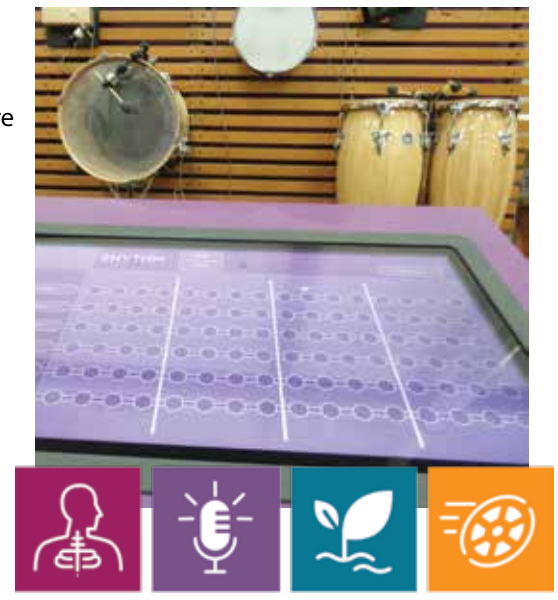
It will also establish a rainwater harvesting system for the college's new Food Innovation Center on the Bronson Healthy Living Campus and develop a master rain garden education program for residents in the Portage Creek and Arcadia Creek watersheds. Funding for this project comes from a three-year federal Clean Water Act Grant from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality. Construction is scheduled to begin early this fall and be completed in 2018.
Also on tap at the Arcadia Commons Campus, are the fall opening of the new Innovation Gallery, Innovation Lab, and Think Tank at the Kalamazoo Valley Museum.

The new exhibit and interactive space will include team-building activities as well as one-on-one, technology-rich exploration of four major areas: Human Body, Environment, Mobility, and Music. "There are more than 26 new interactive challenges for visitors, including the use of game-show-style food systems quizzes, racecar building, wind turbine construction, dancing MRI and x-ray images that follow your every move, climate simulators and the use of endoscopic manipulation," according to Bill McElhone, director of the museum.

The new exhibit will occupy more than 4,500 sq. ft. of completely redesigned space on the third floor. "We are fully committed to the idea of developing more accessible innovative, immersive, and hands-on experiences that are engaging and fun." McElhone said. The museum remains open during construction.

At its core, the museum is an educational institution and is operated by Kalamazoo Valley Community College and governed by its Board of Trustees. Dean of Math, Science, and Health Careers, Dr. Paige Eagan said, "These new offerings have been designed to inspire and nurture the exploration of the related subjects of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math, commonly referred to as STEM, along with History and Art." She went on to say, "not only will the general public enjoy exploring these new exhibits, our faculty will have even more opportunities to incorporate learning at the museum into curriculum and course work offered by the college."

"The infusion of an innovation theme into the traditional science exhibit museum space reflects the growing importance and recognition of the creative spirit within our community," McElhone said. These new offerings complement the other hands-on activities at the museum including the History Gallery and traveling exhibits. Opened in its current Rose Street location on the Arcadia Commons Campus in 1996, the museum attracts more than 130,000 visitors annually.



Music display at the new Innovation exhibit

SEASON OPENING IN SEPTEMBER

HAVIRMILL CAFE

418 FOUR·ONE·EIGHT

Enjoy delicious meals prepared by students enrolled in Kalamazoo Valley's Culinary Arts and Sustainable Food Systems programs in the 418 Restaurant and Havirmill Café.
Visit **www.kvcc.edu/dining** for opening dates, hours and menus.

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The mission of this summit is to educate medical professionals about "Food as Medicine" by emphasizing the linkage between food and disease management.

OCTOBER 21 | 8 AM - 3 PM
www.kvcc.edu/healthylivingsummit

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